

Here beynneth the complaynte of
them that ben to late matych.



After playes sportes and daunces of solace
 We must thynke to come to prosperite
 After that god of his haboundaunte grace
 Wyl proude how that I may gouerne me
 In mynde I purpose wedded to be
 In a better lyfe may no man lyue itt
 Than to be maryed and lyfe out of synne

All yonge louers sholde them so assyle
 That they loue trewely and so for to lyue
 With ardaunte wytte and perfyte style
 All vnto goodnesse themselves for to gyue
 Than may they be sure that they shall thynke
 So wyl I lyue in maryage cleane and pure
 To goddes be houe & in creasyng of nature

To longe haue I lyued without ony make
 All to longe haue I bled my yonge age
 I wyl all for go and a wyse to me take
 For to encrease both our twoos lynage
 For saynt Iohs sayth that he is sage
 That a peny his wyl doth hym gouerne
 And our lordes preceptes hym selfe for to lerne

There is no greter pleasure than for to haue
 A wyfe that is full of prudence and wysdome
 Alas for loue nyght I am in poynte to raue
 These cursed olde men haue an yll custome
 Women for to blame both all and some
 For that they can not theyr myndes full fyl
 Therfore they speke of them but all yll

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Now syth that I haue my tyme bled
for to folowe my folysse pleasaunces
And haue my selfe ostentymes soze abused
At plaes and sportes/pompes and daunces
Spendynge golde & syluer and grete synaunces
for saut of a wyfe the cause is all
To late marped men may me call

The holy sacramente of maryage
Before holy chyrche was ordeyned
for to encrease humayne lynage
He that doth other wyfe is not receyued
Before god thus was man guerdoned
With woman for to lyue at his owene wyll
He is a fole that elles where doth nature spyll

I haue done as the labourer doth
That somtyme is payned with troyll grete
for he leseth his payne for certayne soth
That in the hye waye sotweth his whete
Well I perceyue that I dyde me forgete
O that I put me in to housholde
I haue lost my seed my worke is but colde

Women and maydens/both good and ill
With me I helde my selfe for to please
The one dyde rebell/the other abode still
O ther made me well at myn ease
Cupido than came me for to cease
Venus lyghted her blonde of fyre
for suche serupce suche guerdob & hyre
Late mary.

A.ii.

Thus rauysshed in this sayd abusyon
 I was taken with a cautious wyle
 That me thought to make conclusyon
 Of my weddyng with in a whyle
 But yet dyde they me begyle
 They caused me for to make grete dyspence
 For I was no soner wedd through my negligence

I wolde do make commune I mys
 My propre goodes so was I ryght
 Of wytte and was all wayes redy as is
 A man of armes in poynt to fyght
 Other whyles I went me ryght
 In to places my selfe solyfyng
 But nother frequented that begynge

Yf I with helde ony praty one
 Sweetly enough she made me chere
 Sayenge that she loued no persone
 But me and therto she dyde swere
 But whan I wente fro that place there
 Unto an other she dyde as moche
 For they loue none but for theyr poche

I had fyue or fyre companyons
 That haunted with me euery houre
 But I haue knowen to suche garlons
 In secrete they haue done socoure
 Yf that they enioyed my paramoure
 With grete payne durste I it to them saye
 Force me was to kepe counseyll alwaye

I wote well that I haue ryght sore warped
 For to haue wylled for to lyue alone
 For to haue ben to late maryed
 For that I haue herde so longe a gone
 For she that abandoneth to more than one
 I dare wyl swere and ther with it sustyne
 That she abandoneth vnto a dolapne

For she regards ful of banyte
 I kest ouer swarte and eke contrauers
 To daye I had peas rest and buyte
 To morowe I had plete & proesse dyuers
 Breke I dyde doers and fenestres
 Sargenantes met me by the waye
 And enprysoned both me and my praye

Subiecte I was to a meyn of balodes
 And vnto a grete company of brothelles
 Whiche to me brought an hepe of rpbaudes
 Dyonhardes that loued well good moyseselles
 Knaues & theues that wolde pyke quarelles
 I gaue them clothes I knewe not theyr ble
 There is none so subtyll but loue doth hym abuse

Alas I haue all my tyme spent and lost
 Whiche for to recouer is impossyble
 Spent haue I nature at grete expens and cost
 Apenst the ryght canon and of the holy byble
 Offens done to god neuer ceasyble
 In daunger for to forsayte bothe soule & lyfe
 By defaute for to haue taken vnto me a wyfe

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Lyke vnto a best and hors or an asse
That careth not for to tomble in the fen
yf that ony with me playenge there was
An other to helpe I wolde go then
Who gallantes a man sholde se than ren
After a wentche and lepe and hytche
Than dogges do about a farowinge hytche

She wolde to no maner a man escondyte
Eche one she appettyed for to receyue
Takynge therein pleasure and deylte
To the ende they? syluer for to haue
But in the stede chyldren to conceyue
Botches pokes and goutes they engendre
In hedes and in legges and in euery membre

In this maner of skenesse many ther be
That ben Impotentes hanged and dede
But lytell semblaunce they make on to se
Taken as they ben / not beggynge they? brede
Hast you to be wedded thus I yow rede
Unto the ende that ye be not cappable
Of this grete daunger / deedly and incurable

Now am I out of this daunger so alenge
Wherfore I am gladde it for to perseuer
Longe about haue I ben me for to reuge
But it is better to late than to be neuer
Certes I was not in my lyfe tyll hyther
So full of Ioye that doth my herte in spyre
Wedded folke haue tyme at they? desyre

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Out am I now of thought dole and mone
Lypynge euer moze ryght amozouly
For I haue a wyfe by my selfe alone
At my comaundement both late and ere
And yf it happen that I loke heuely
My wyfe me kylleth & than she me colleth
And ryght woman there she me consolleth

To that I wyll haue done she is redy
Neuer wyll she apenst my wyll saye
She doth to me the best that she can truly
Nothyng of my volenty she doth me naye
Yf I be angred or trobled ony waye
Redy she is to chaunge my purpose
Unto the ende that I may haue all my repose

I haue me all to longe refrayned
Turnyshe I can not to all her pleasyre
And for to promysse her I am constrayned
More than I can do to her desyre
She appetyteth it moche & doth me enspyre
Gorgyously shewynge her fayre corlage
But I am all caduc and wery for age

I ought for to haue by this many chyldren
Some spote and playe & some at fyre syttinge
Other in the felde to shote lepe and ren
And some hardy / some mery & tryumphynge
In whome I shoulde haue all my delityng
But so late maryd without en dout
May neuer se his chyldren ren out

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My wyfe shewed to me her proper dugges
On the mornyng her delpte for to make
And to haue me for to playe nugges a nugges
Alas I wolde it full fayne forsake
But force it is suche lessons to take
And to ryse vp early as I thynke best
In the mornyng and go vnto my rest

Whan I se her lye in shetes fayre and whyte
As rede as the button of the rose
With good wyll wolde I take than delpte
Neuer theles I lete her haue her repose
For it is force that I cast agayne on the close
And to make a pawsle than I am condynt
For thynstrumment is not yet well in port

But yet somtyme I me constrayne
To take nature solace thus thynke I
But all sodeynly I me restrayne
For I do fere to be to soone wery
And than I slepe with courage all dery
And yet am I / I can not passe
Upon women more than euer I was

Constrayned I am to be full of Ialousy
Seynge that I can not content her mynde
Touchyng the playe of loue all softly
Often ynough the experyence to fynde
She me assayeth and tourneth by kynde
Castyng vnto me her beggyng legges
But I do slepe I care not for suche a begge

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With her eyen pleasaunte castynge a regarde
In chastyng a laughter a merous
Than with a praty smyle she doth me larde
And that maketh me somewhat Ioyous
But comynge to a bed delycious
For to holde the spere in a full hande
It plyeth and sayleth for wyll not stonde

Whan I herde her bable and langage
Her gentyll termes spoken so properly
I do me wyshe for to be in to the age
Of eygheten/neyntene/or foure and twenty
Suche assautes than gyue wolde I
That for it sholde haue no nede to craue
Of the grete pleasure that she sholde haue

If that she go to banckettes and daunces
She doth none offence therein certayne
Redes she must haue her plesaunces
In some place to make her glad and fayne
Wherfore I dare well say and susteyne
That after with me I wolde haue her ledde
Yf ony soner I had ben to her wedde

Me twayne sholde haue all our yongenesse
After maryage custome and ryght
Passed in Ioye/solace/and gladnesse
And is wherfore I haue me pyght
Forc it is to me that the fyre be nyght
That at a nede I can not haue quenched
To late maryed is for to be complayned

Late mary.

B.i

It is sayd that man in scrupytude
Hym putteth/whan he doth to woman bende
He ne hath but only habytude
Unto her the whiche well doth hym tende
Who wyll to housholde compr̄hende
And there a bout studyeth in youth alwayes
He shall haue honour in his olde dayes

Some chyldren vnto the courtes hauntes
And ben puruayed of benefyces
Some haunteth markettes & be marchauntes
Byenge and sellynge theyr marchaūdyces
Or elles constytued in offyces
Theyr faders and moders haue grete solace
That to late maryed by no waye hase

I be wayll the tyme that is so spent
That I ne me hasted for to wedde
For I shall haue herytage and rente
Both golde and syluer and kynred
But syth that our lord hath ordeyned
That I this sacrament take me vpon
I wyll kepe it trewely at all season

Theophrastus vs sheweth in his prose
That in maryage all is out of tune
So doth also the romanute of the rose
Composed by mayster Johā de mechune
Yet neuertheles it is all comune
That they neuer were in bonde of maryage
Wherfore at all adventures is theyr langage

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Mathewlus that was holden so wyse
For to blame womem was all his ebate
Suppose that he was maryed twyse
For he was so olde that balde was his pate
For he came the last tyme so berplate
That in hym there was no puyssaunce
Amyte/solace/ Joye ne pleasure

But whan that a man may do no moze
He blame that/that he can not do
To late wedded the surplus therfore
May not furnyshe as other may do
For whan he wened to satysfye lo
Nature at nede wyll not hym pꝛeuayle
Suche weners do to well y other whyle fayle

Yf that there be ony tryfelers
That haue wylled for to blame maryage
I dare well saye that they ben but lyers
Or elles god sayled in the fyrste age
Adam bereth wytnesse and tesmonage
Maryed he was and comen we ben
God dyde choyse maryage vnto all men

Now syth it is thus befall
Why than ought we it to blame
Us for to put we ben holden all
So holde we alwayes holde with the same
Or elles holy scripture sayeth it is shame
And that alleggeth all pꝛedycacours
Our lord god hateth all fornycatours
Late mary. B.ii.

I am now forþ that I haue no rathe
 But my selfe into maryages rout
 For many a folyſhe loke it hath
 It hath me coſt here and there about
 But yet my ſoule is in grette doute
 For god fornycatures punyſheth
 And out of this realme he them banyſheth

There is no man lypynge that can comynyt
 Without outen the worke of nature
 But he in maryage doth comynſe it
 As vs telleth the holy ſcripture
 It is than foly to ony creature
 Thus for to blame his creaſon
 For ony maner of folyſhe oppnyon

All they that by theyr ſubtyll artes
 Hath wylled for to blame maryage
 I wyl ſuſteyne that they be baſtardes
 Or at leaſt waye an euill courage
 For to ſaye that therein is ſeruage
 In maryage / but I it reny
 For therein is but humayne company

Yf ther be yll women and rebell
 Shrewed diſpytous & eke felonyous
 There be other ſayre & do full well
 Propre / gentyll / luſty / and Joyous
 That ben full of grace and vertuouſ
 They ben not all boyn vnder a ſygnet
 Happy is he that a good one can get

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To late marped now helpe than me
To make my sorowes and complayntes
For by my sayth I swere to the
I haue suffred many dolours & crayntes
And haue sustayned mo attayntes
Than euer dede wat after the hounde
At dyspence I lyued & that haue I founde

Galantes playne ye the tyme that ye haue lost
Mary you be tyme as the wyse man sayth
Tolled I haue ben fro pyler to post
In commysynge natures werke alwayes
I haue passed full many quasy dayes
That now vnto good I can not mate
For mary I dyde my selfe to late

Bychelyp in a raye ought for to go
These women that be obedyent
Better than these cursed wyues do
That ben not to theyr husbandes pacient
To take a wyfe was myn intent
Goddess lawes to kepe and them to obserue
Sauynge of nature and heuen to preserue

Afore that euer I was marped
Bordeles I haunted and places of infame
But I am now vnto a wyfe alayed
The worlde to holde & honoure goddess neme
That wycked man I holde to blame
That foloweth cuyll ruell and wyll not amende
Unto his soules heth and honoure to pretende
Late mary. B.iii.

Whan a man to olde age is faden and fall
Lerne this lesson herken my sentence
Fewe frendes meteth he with all
That wyll to his pouerte take any intellygence
Wo worthe than crye they of the expence
That they haue spent vnto youthe's lust
And now they must dye for hunger & thirst

Better it is in youth a wyfe for to take
And lyue with her to goddes pleasaunce
Than to go in age for goddes sake
In wordely sorowe and perturbaunce
For youthe's loue and bitteraunce
And than to dye at the last ende
And be dampned in hell with the foule fende

The auctour.

Bychenes in youth with good gouernaunce
Often helpeth age whan youth is gone his gate
Both yonge & olde must haue theyr sustenaunce
Eu er in this worlde soo fekyll and rethrogate
Byght as an ampte the whiche all gate
Crusseth and carpeth for his lyues fode
Eny thyng that whiche hym semeth to be good

Crysten folke ought for to haue
Open hertes vnto god almyght
Putrynge in theyr mynde theyr soule to saue
Lernynge to come vnto the eternall lyght
And kepe well theyr maryage & trouth plyght
Nothyng alwaye of theyr last ende
Durynge theyr lyues how theyr tyme spende

Here endeth the complaynt of to late maryed
 For spendynge of tyme or they a boꝛde
 The sayd holy sacramente haue to longe taryed
 Humayne nature tassemble & it to accorde
 Enprynted in fletestrete by wynkyn de worde
 Dwellynge in the famous cyte of London
 His hous in the same at the sygne of the Sonne.

CHAS.



